

REMARKS / ARGUMENTS

Claims 12-17 remain pending in this application. No claims have been canceled or added.

Priority

Applicants appreciate the Examiner's acknowledgment of the claim for priority and safe receipt of the priority document.

35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 12-17 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Imamura (U.S. Patent No. 6,126,906). These rejections are traversed as follows.

The outstanding rejection is based upon a newly cited reference found by the Examiner upon updating the search. However, the Examiner's reliance upon this new reference, Imamura, is misplaced. Imamura discloses an apparatus in which a PFC-containing gas is introduced into a first water scrubber configured to wash the PFC-containing gas with water. The washed gas is then sent through water tank 10 to a heated gas decomposer tower 2 where at least 90% of the PFC is removed. This processed gas is then sent to a second water scrubber 3 through water tank 10 to dissolve the fluorine components in the water. Then, the flammable components

contained therein are burned in a burner tower 4 and discharged through gas discharging 8 by the action of a suction fan 7.

However, Imamura clearly fails to disclose or suggest the gas suction apparatus or the mist separation apparatus of the pending claims. The gas suction apparatus is used for sucking the discharged gas in the acid gas removing apparatus by a jet stream of an injecting gas, thereby ejecting the gas. The mist separation apparatus is used for separating mists from the gas discharged from the acid gas removing apparatus by suction by the gas suction apparatus.

Although Imamura discloses providing a water tank 10 below gas decomposer tower 2 and second water scrubber 3, water tank 10 is different from the tank of the present invention. The tank recited in claim 12 is "for receiving one of the water and the aqueous alkaline solution from the acid gas removing apparatus and a discharging piping leading the mists separated in the mist separating apparatus to the tank". Imamura is silent with respect to the treatment of acid gas mist. Therefore, one of ordinary skill in the art could not arrive at the presently claimed invention by considering the teaching of Imamura.

Request for Interview

Applicants request that the Examiner conduct an interview with the undersigned in order to further prosecution of this application. In this regard, the Examiner is hereby invited to contact the undersigned by telephone to arrange an appropriate time for such interview.

Appl. No. 10/090,817
Amendment dated June 13, 2006
Reply to Office Action of December 14, 2005

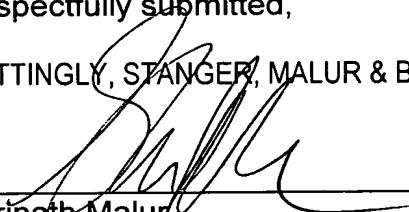
ASA-1028-02

Conclusion

In view of the foregoing, Applicant respectfully requests that a timely Notice of Allowance be issued in this case.

Respectfully submitted,

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